

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 422
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27868
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1887

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

October 25, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20500-0003

Dear Mr. President

We are disappointed and gravely concerned to learn that the Christian military chaplains are under direct attack and that their right to pray according to their faith is in jeopardy. As you may know, the Air Force leadership recently released proposed guidelines that will restrict how Air Force chaplains can pray, and if approved, those guidelines may well be implemented throughout the entire DoD. We believe that the Air Force's suppression of religious freedom is a pervasive problem throughout our nation's Armed Forces, and it has come to our attention that in all branches of the military it is becoming increasingly difficult for Christian chaplains to use the name of Jesus when praying. There are currently no laws or regulations that prohibit chaplains from praying according to their respective denominations or different faiths, and we are deeply concerned that chaplains are now being instructed on what to say when they pray.

Throughout our nation's history, chaplains not only have remained an integral part of our military, but they also have always prayed according to their faith tradition; and Christian chaplains have always been able to pray using the name of Jesus. We believe that if Christian chaplains are chosen to pray before a professional setting, then they—as with the chaplain of any other faith—have a constitutional right to adhere to the religious expressions of their faith. Praying in the name of Jesus is a fundamental part of Christian belief and to suppress this form of expression would be a violation of religious freedom.

The current demand in the guidelines for so-called “no-sectarian” prayers is merely a euphemism declaring that prayers will be acceptable only so long as they censor Christian beliefs. Current surveys in the military indicate that upwards of 80 percent of soldiers identify themselves as Christians, and such censorship of Christian beliefs is a disservice not only to Christian chaplains, but also to the hundreds of thousands of Christian soldiers in the military who look to their chaplains for comfort, inspiration, and support, just as our military soldiers of other faiths look to the chaplains of their faith.

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 422
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27868
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1897

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

While some military members may find certain prayers to be offensive and wrongly claim that they are not non-pluralistic, we believe these restrictions raise constitutional issues involving the Establishment, Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment (There are numerous other offensive provisions throughout the proposed guidelines, including the onerous provision that chaplains can only speak of their faith with officers—the “peer to peer” provision). Officially inhibiting or defining what chaplains can and cannot say in effect establishes an official religion and burdens our military’s chaplains’ right of free speech.

We are requesting that you, as Commander and Chief, protect by Executive Order the constitutional right of military chaplains to pray according to their faith.

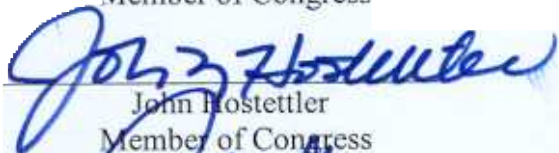
With deep concern,



Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress



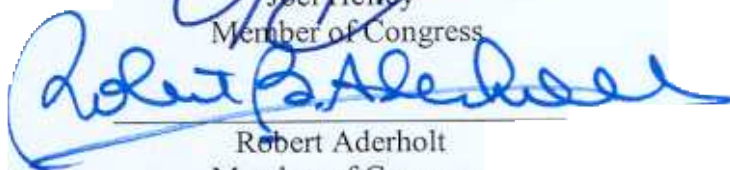
Sam Johnson
Member of Congress



John Hostettler
Member of Congress



Joel Hefley
Member of Congress



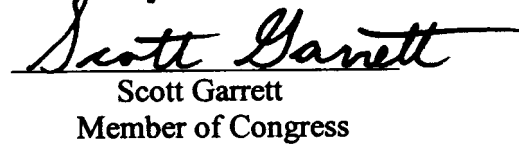
Robert Aderholt
Member of Congress



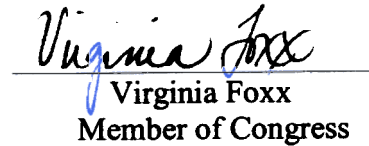
Joseph Pitts
Member of Congress



Trent Franks
Member of Congress



Scott Garrett
Member of Congress



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 422
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

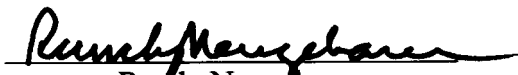
COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
(252) 931-1003
(800) 361-1697

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303



Dave Weldon
Member of Congress



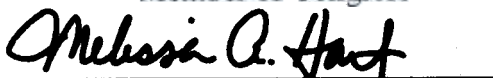
Randy Neugebauer
Member of Congress



Michael Bilirakis
Member of Congress



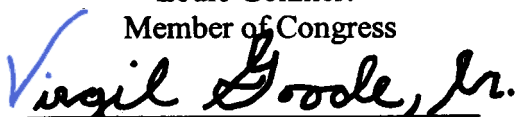
John Culberson
Member of Congress



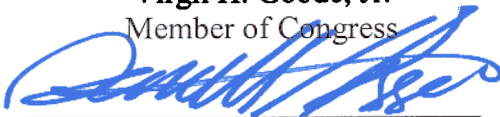
Melissa Hart
Member of Congress



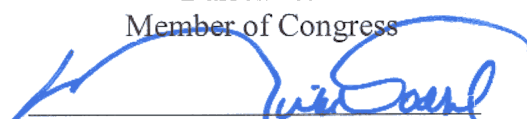
Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress



Virgil H. Goode, Jr.
Member of Congress



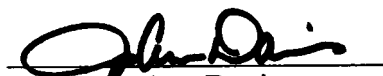
Darrell Issa
Member of Congress



Michael E. Sodrel
Member of Congress



J. Gresham Barrett
Member of Congress



Jo Ann Davis
Member of Congress



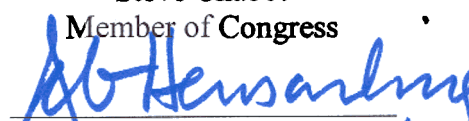
Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress



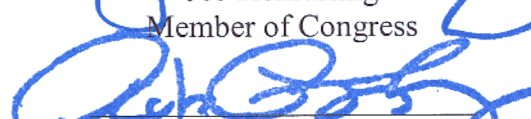
Henry Brown
Member of Congress



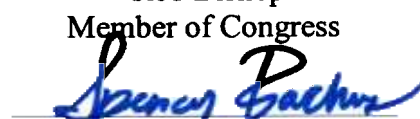
Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



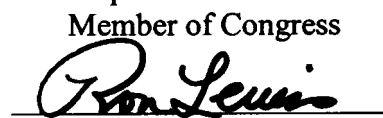
Jeb Hensarling
Member of Congress



Rob Bishop
Member of Congress



Spencer Bachus
Member of Congress



Ron Lewis
Member of Congress

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 422
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

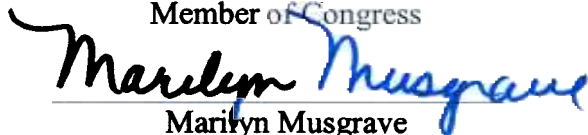
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
(252) 831-1003
(800) 351-1887


Steve King

Member of Congress


Robin Hayes

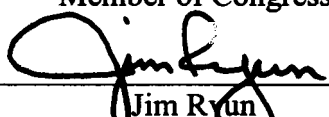
Member of Congress


Marilyn Musgrave

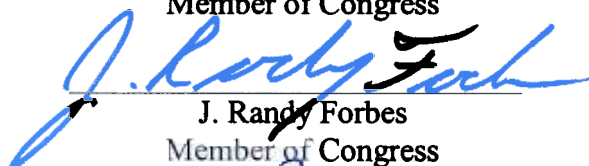
Member of Congress


Mike McIntyre

Member of Congress


Jim Ryan

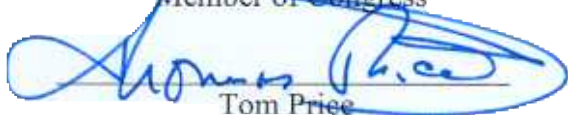
Member of Congress


J. Randy Forbes

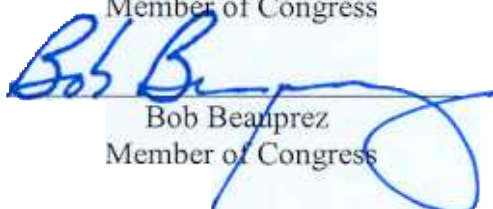
Member of Congress


Ron Paul

Member of Congress


Tom Price

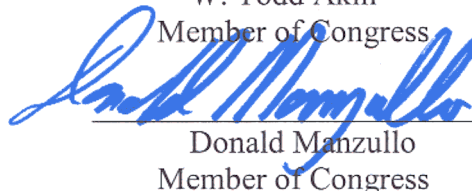
Member of Congress


Bob Beauprez

Member of Congress


W. Todd Akin

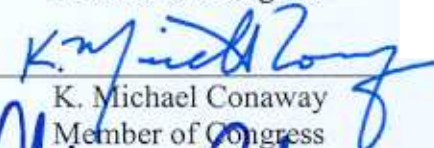
Member of Congress


Donald Manzullo

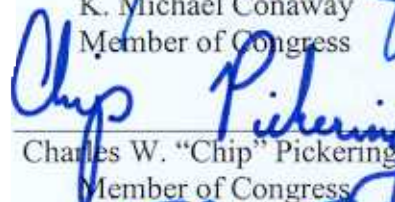
Member of Congress


Mark Souder

Member of Congress


K. Michael Conaway

Member of Congress


Charles W. "Chip" Pickering

Member of Congress


Todd Tiahrt

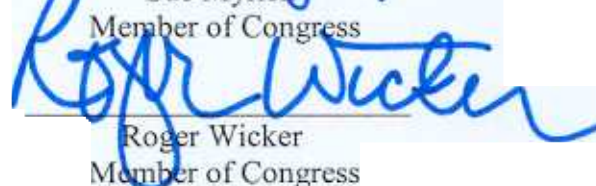
Member of Congress


Katherine Harris

Member of Congress


Sue Myrick

Member of Congress


Roger Wicker

Member of Congress

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 422
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

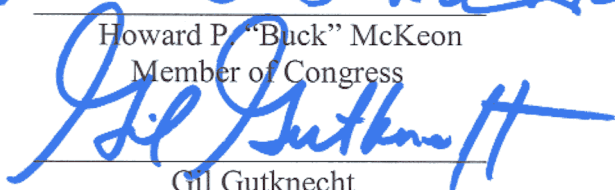
COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

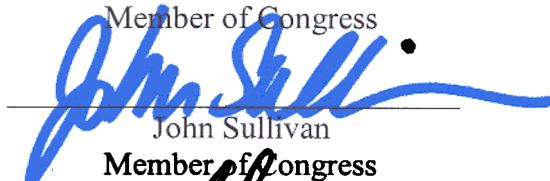
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27868
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1897



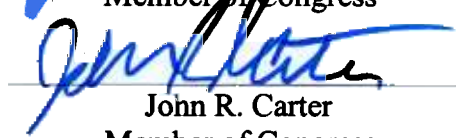
Howard P. "Buck" McKeon
Member of Congress



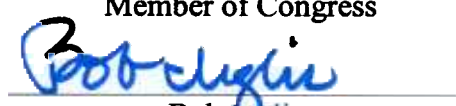
Gil Gutknecht
Member of Congress



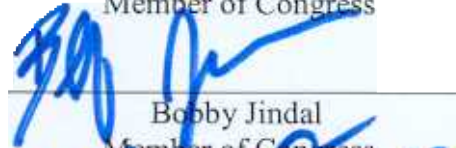
John Sullivan
Member of Congress



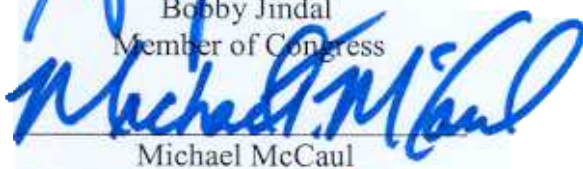
John R. Carter
Member of Congress



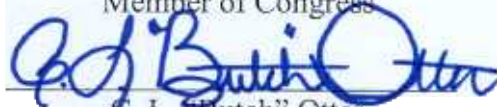
Bob Inglis
Member of Congress



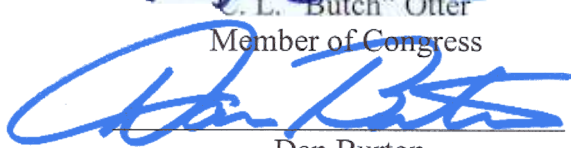
Bobby Jindal
Member of Congress



Michael McCaul
Member of Congress



C. L. "Butch" Otter
Member of Congress



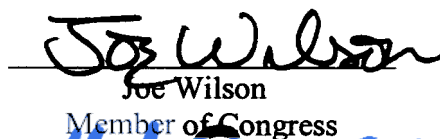
Dan Burton
Member of Congress



Jeff Miller
Member of Congress



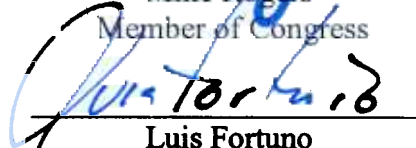
Rodney Alexander
Member of Congress



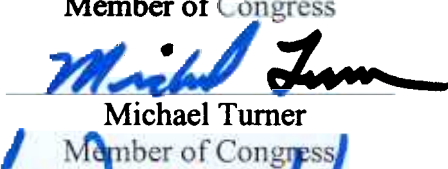
Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



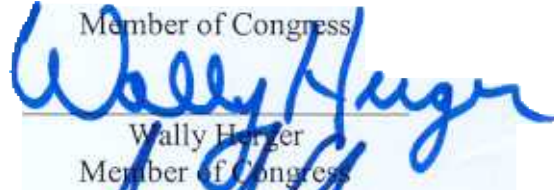
Mike Rogers
Member of Congress



Luis Fortuno
Member of Congress



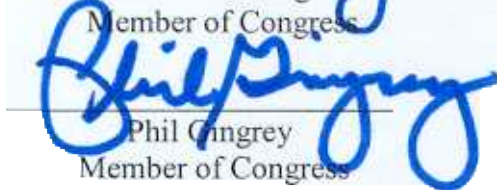
Michael Turner
Member of Congress



Wally Hager
Member of Congress



Michael C. Burgess
Member of Congress



Phil Gingrey
Member of Congress

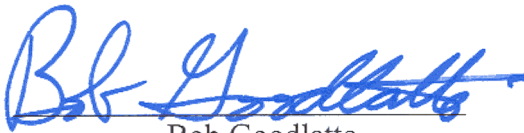
WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 422
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

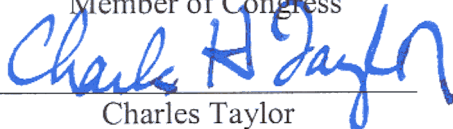
COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27868
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1697

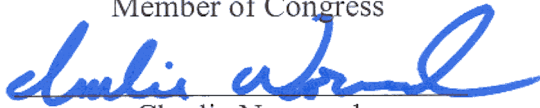
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303



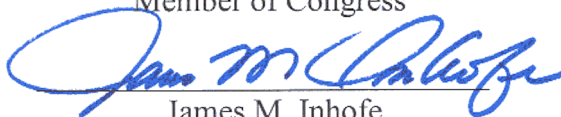
Bob Goodlatte
Member of Congress



Charles Taylor
Member of Congress



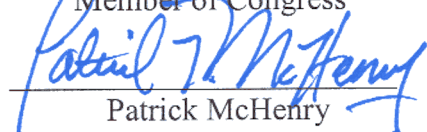
Charlie Norwood
Member of Congress



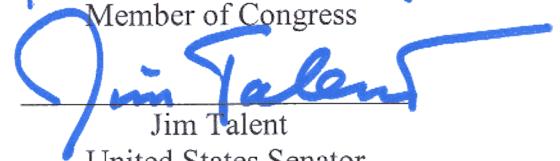
James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress



Patrick McHenry
Member of Congress



Jim Talent
United States Senator